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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Security Council to hold more open meetings to improve flow of information between Council members and other United Nations Member States.

+ Special Commission on disarmament of Iraq reports considerable progress towards fulfilment of its mandate in last six months; notes testing of ongoing monitoring and verification system.

+ Former United States President Carter meets with Bosnian Serb leaders in Pale; ICRC reports continued ethnic cleansing in Serb-controlled territory in north-east Bosnia and Herzegovina.

+ Secretary-General expresses sadness at death of Bradford Morse, former Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs and UNDP Administrator.

+ Administrative and Budgetary Committee approves additional $6.3 million appropriation for Integrated Management Information System for 1994-1995, and $1 million authorization for 1996.

+ Inter-clan fighting resumes in Mogadishu as Somali peace efforts fail; United States to assist security operation for withdrawal of UNOSOM II.

+ WFP secures contributions to cover 88,000-tonnes shortfall in emergency food aid for Mozambique.

+ Sub-Saharan African countries agree on programme to implement Plan of Action adopted by Cairo Population Conference.

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Press Release DH/1796
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The Security Council has said it will meet more often in open sessions to improve the flow of information and ideas between members of the Council and other United Nations Member States. In a statement read out by its President, Manzi Bakuramutsa (Rwanda), on Friday night, the Council stated that it wished to respond to the widespread desire for greater recourse to open meetings.

The Presidential statement followed discussion on a French proposal that the Council meet in public for "orientation debates" in which non-Council members could participate, and for public exchanges of views between Council members. Several representatives said that greater transparency in the Council's work and expanded participation by non-members would enhance its credibility and assure greater compliance with its mandates. Speakers also called for the participation of parties to conflicts in private Security Council consultations concerning those conflicts.

France told the Council that under its Provisional Rules of Procedure, public meetings should be the rule, not the exception. The United Kingdom said the Council should strive for the greatest possible transparency in its work consistent with efficiency and effectiveness. Informal consultations, through which so much of the Council's work was conducted, must be retained.

Under the Charter, the Security Council acted on behalf of all Member States and must be accountable to them, China stressed. Democratization and transparency would help the general membership better understand Council decision-making, and enhance the authority of its decisions. Brazil said the Provisional Rules of Procedure provided no basis for informal consultations. Since the substantive work of the Council currently took place in those consultations, they should be provided for legally; otherwise, legally-binding decisions would be made at meetings for which there was no legal basis.

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The Special Commission on the disarmament of Iraq has made much progress towards the fulfilment of its mandate in the last six months, according to the latest report of the Commission's Executive Chairman. The report was transmitted by the Secretary-General to the Security Council in a note dated 15 December.

The Commission said that its ongoing monitoring and verification system was provisionally operational and that its efficacy was being tested. Meanwhile, the major elements for chemical and missile monitoring were in place and interim monitoring in the chemical area had begun. In addition, a mechanism for monitoring Iraq's trade in dual-purpose items had been elaborated and appeared to have met with approval.

The report covered certain issues which had yet to be resolved. It stressed that Iraq must provide credible accounts for all its past proscribed programmes and capabilities and supporting evidence, so that the Commission could be confident it was monitoring all facilities covered by Council resolutions. The report also called attention to the Commission's serious financial situation, which jeopardized the monitoring and verification regime and might even endanger continuous operations.

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Former United States President Jimmy Carter met today with the Bosnian Serb leadership in Pale, according to a United Nations spokesman. Mr. Carter was briefed earlier in the day by military and civilian staff of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), which is facilitating all aspects of his visit in the mission area. Yesterday, he had a meeting with Special Representative Yasushi Akashi in Zagreb.

At a press conference in Sarajevo yesterday, the former President said he was in the region to assist in the alleviation of tension; the reopening of Sarajevo airport; the passage of humanitarian convoys; and the release of all United Nations personnel. He also sought to focus attention on the protection of human rights, and hoped to see some progress towards a comprehensive cease-fire and negotiations based on the Contact Group's proposal.

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Meanwhile, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has reported that ethnic cleansing continued last week in Serb-controlled territory in north-east Bosnia. It said that some 111 non-Serbs had arrived in Tuzla after being driven out of Bijeljina.

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Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali today expressed great sadness at the death of Bradford Morse. Mr. Morse was Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs from 1972 to 1976, and Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) from 1976 to 1986. He also served six terms in the United States House of Representatives.

The Secretary-General said Mr. Morse exemplified the best qualities of the international civil servant, citing his work to promote the UNDP's role in economic and social development.

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The Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) today approved an additional $6.3 million appropriation for the United Nations Integrated Management Information System for the 1994-1995 biennium. It also approved another $1 million commitment authorization for 1996. The Committee took that action on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ).

The ACABQ recommendations were made after considering a request by the Secretary-General for $7.3 million for the System in the 1994-1995 biennium. The funds will be used to strengthen and extend the duration of a project team hired to help with the introduction of the System.

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Inter-clan fighting resumed in Mogadishu today as Somali efforts to find a formula for a peace settlement produced no results, according to a United Nations spokesman. He noted that the United States would be joining the multinational effort to provide back-up security for the withdrawal of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II), which would take place through the first quarter of next year.

The spokesman said that despite the situation in Somalia, the World Food Programme (WFP) had managed to distribute almost 400,000 metric tons of food aid to some 250,000 people in need in the last month.

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Donors have acted promptly to cover a shortfall of 88,000 tonnes in emergency food aid for Mozambique, according to the WFP. Since the shortfall was announced in late October, the Programme has received pledges of 85,600 tonnes of maize and 3,200 tonnes of vegetable oil that will allow food distribution to continue as planned, particularly for refugees who returned from neighbouring countries this year.

The shortfall was due to an increase in the estimated number of people who will need food aid in early 1995. In mid-1994, returnees began to arrive in Mozambique in larger numbers and at a faster pace than expected, while more people were effected by poor crops in the centre and south of the country. TheWFP plans to distributefood aid to1.5 million people thismonth.

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Participants at last week's high-level meeting on implementation of the goals of the International Conference on Population and Development agreed on a comprehensive follow-up programme for sub-Saharan Africa. The meeting was one in a series of regional consultations being conducted by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

Representatives from 27 sub-Saharan African countries, including ministers, senior parliamentarians and health experts, issued a set of recommendations for the region. They advocated the creation of a strategy, adaptable to each African country, to mobilize broad support for the Cairo Plan of Action, and the integration of reproductive health and family planning services into primary health care systems.

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